The Doubt Dial: Visualising Answers with Evidence

About this idea

We need to improve how people can quickly and easily understand answers to questions, and how well they can trust the evidence. This idea to improve how people can understand information from evidence synthesis was developed in 2017 by Dr Jack Nunn- and is being shared now by Science for All in the spirit of open learning and sharing.

This document was created March 5th 2026 - a STARDIT report about this idea can be found here: https://stardit.wikimedia.org.au/wiki/0202603050002

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Summary of the idea

- We need something visual which summarises the answers to complex evidence synthesis.
- It needs to work for people with little or no reading skills.
- The main display should be an analogue-style dial showing whether the answer is 'Yes', 'Unsure', or 'No', and indicating the certainty of the answer by how far to the left or right the needle points. This could be aligned with the GRADE approach (Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development and Evaluation).[1]
- 'Yes' (left side) should be green, 'No' (right side) red, and 'Unsure' a grey area in the middle.
- There should also be a 'phone battery style' meter underneath the dial indicating the 'data available' to answer the question.
- If available data is 'low', it should indicate this as a low percentage in the 'red' of the battery meter, 'middle' orange, and 'high' green.
- The battery mete should move as more data is available, and be coded in a way that it can visualise 'living' systematic reviews - if the answer changes, the dial should move.

Visual Mock-Up of the Doubt-Dial

Level of data available to answer question

[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GRADE_approach